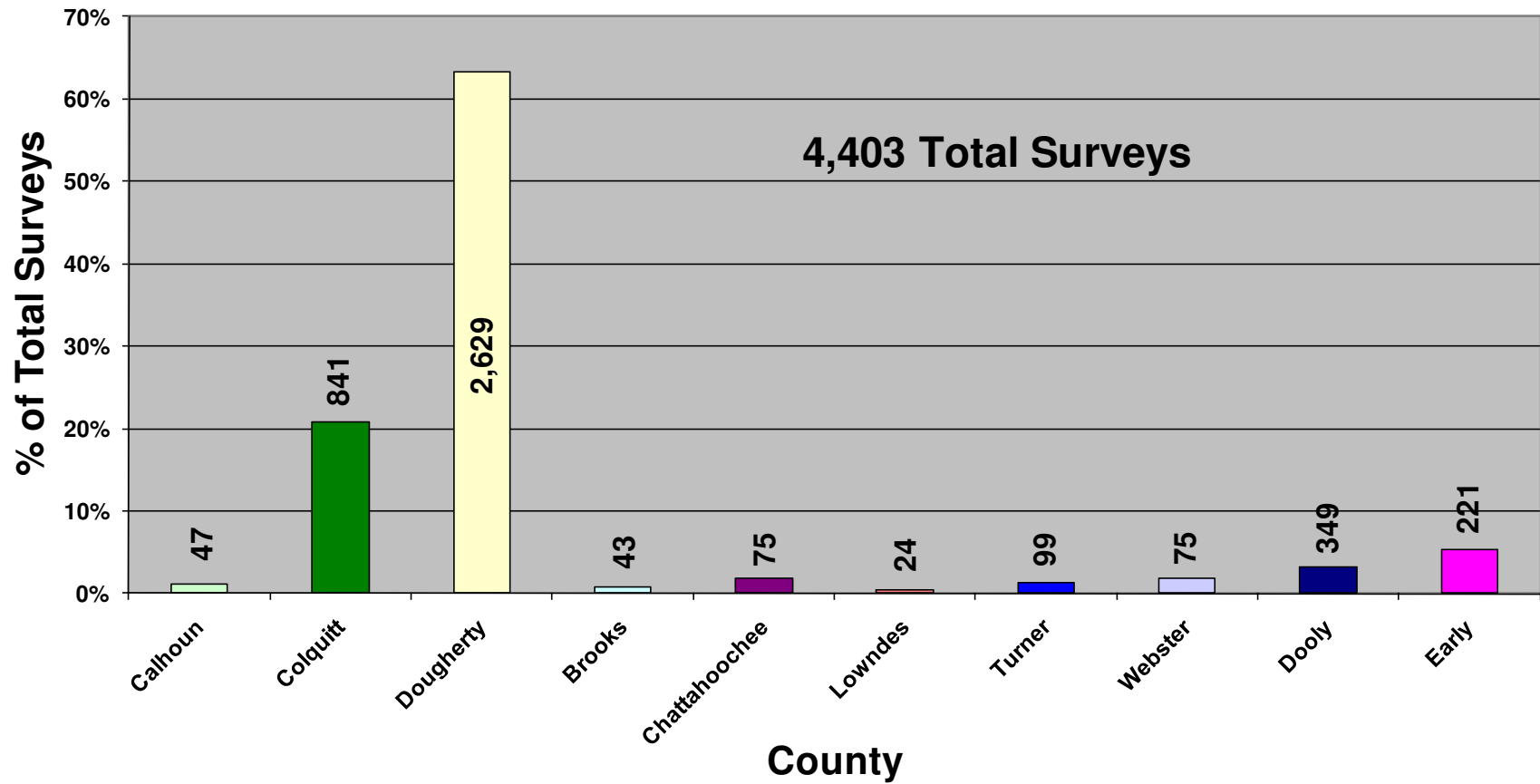


Public Involvement Activities

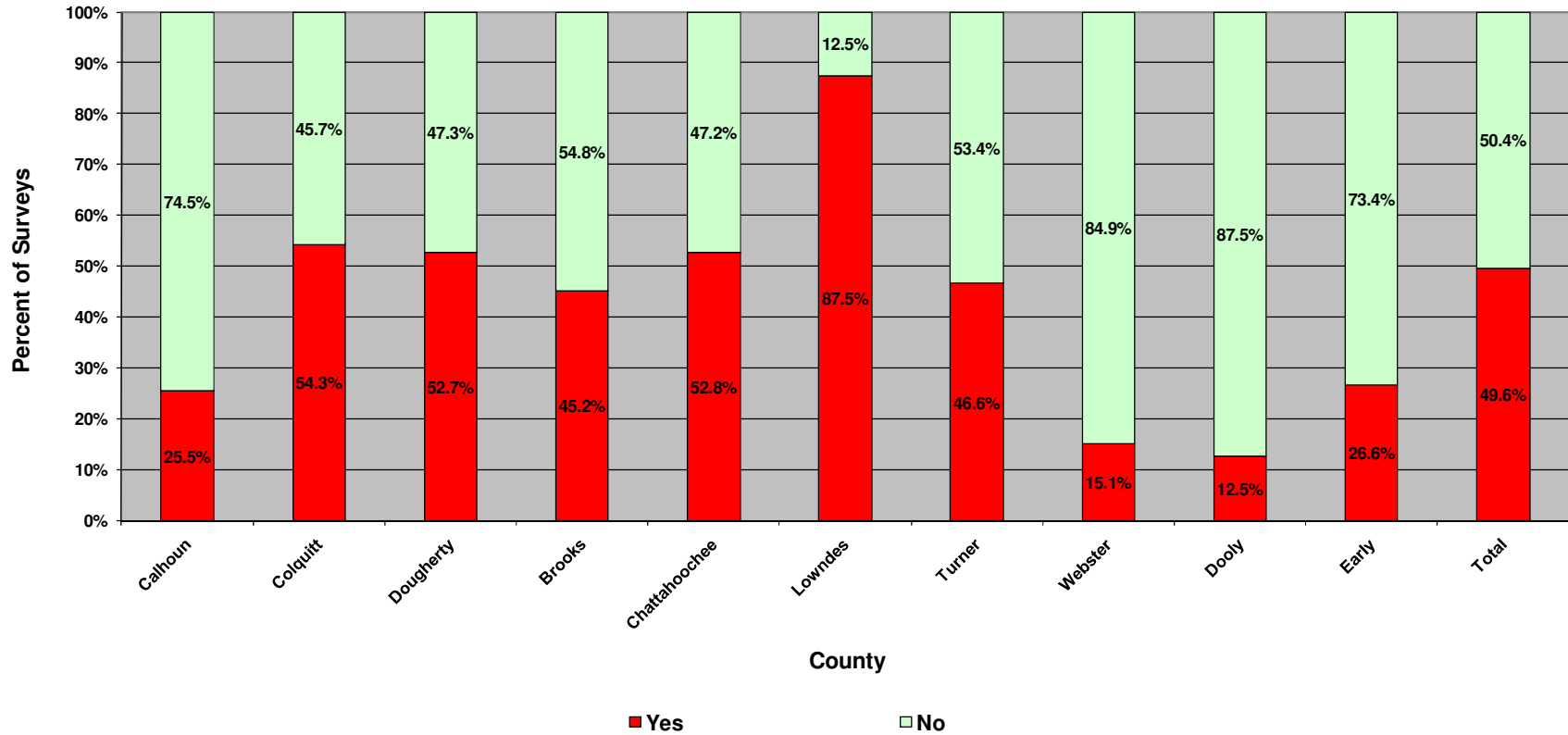
A basic principle of public involvement for public funded transportation studies is to proactively reach out to the public. The study area for the Southwest Georgia Interstate Study consists of 32 counties located in southwest Georgia with a 2000 population of approximately 840,000 persons. Traditional public involvement techniques were not a feasible option for the study area given the low density of each of the study area counties and the sheer size of the study area to reach out to the study area's racial and ethnic minority and low-income populations. An alternative approach was developed to reach the maximum number of residents in the study area regardless of ethnicity or income.

To gather the public's point of view on both the existing travel conditions and the needed transportation improvements, a *Needs Assessment* survey was developed. The *Needs Assessment* survey consisted of a variety of questions ranging from general household characteristics to major travel patterns, concerns and issues. In order to maximize the distribution of the survey, the school systems of each of the counties and cities located within the study areas were asked to participate in the process by distributing the survey to the school students. By engaging school students, and by default their parents, GDOT was able to reach a large and diverse audience which may have otherwise been missed using traditional outreach activities. Sixteen of the counties and two of the municipalities agreed to participate. Surveys were distributed either electronically or in hard copy format. Approximately 4,400 surveys were returned. The results from some of the key questions are summarized in the following charts by county. The general implication of the responses identified the need for transportation improvements but not necessarily the need for an interstate or interstate-type facility. The overall concerns for most areas include the need for traffic signals at existing intersections, safety improvements at existing intersections, problems with speeding, and problems with tractor trailer trucks.

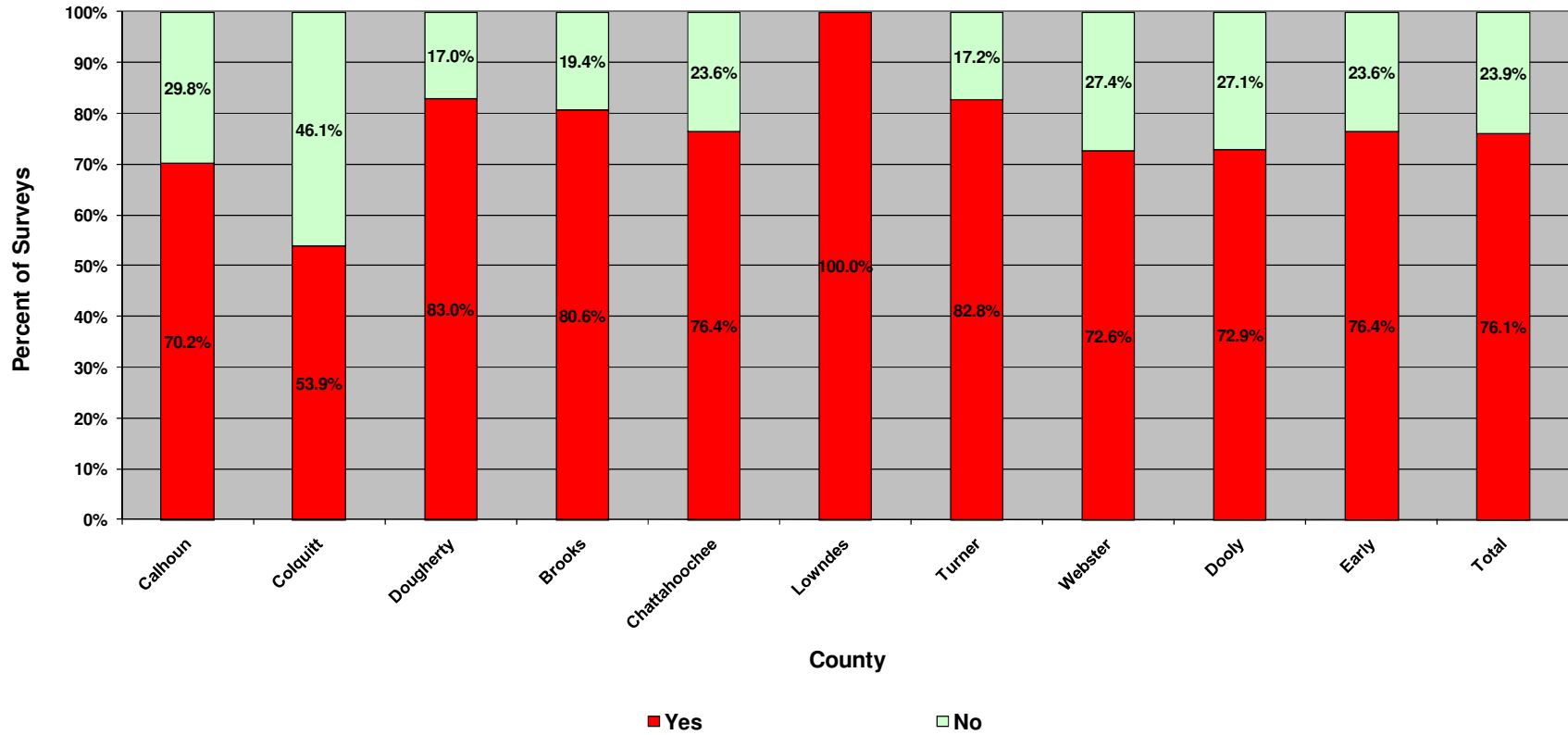
Percent of Surveys by County



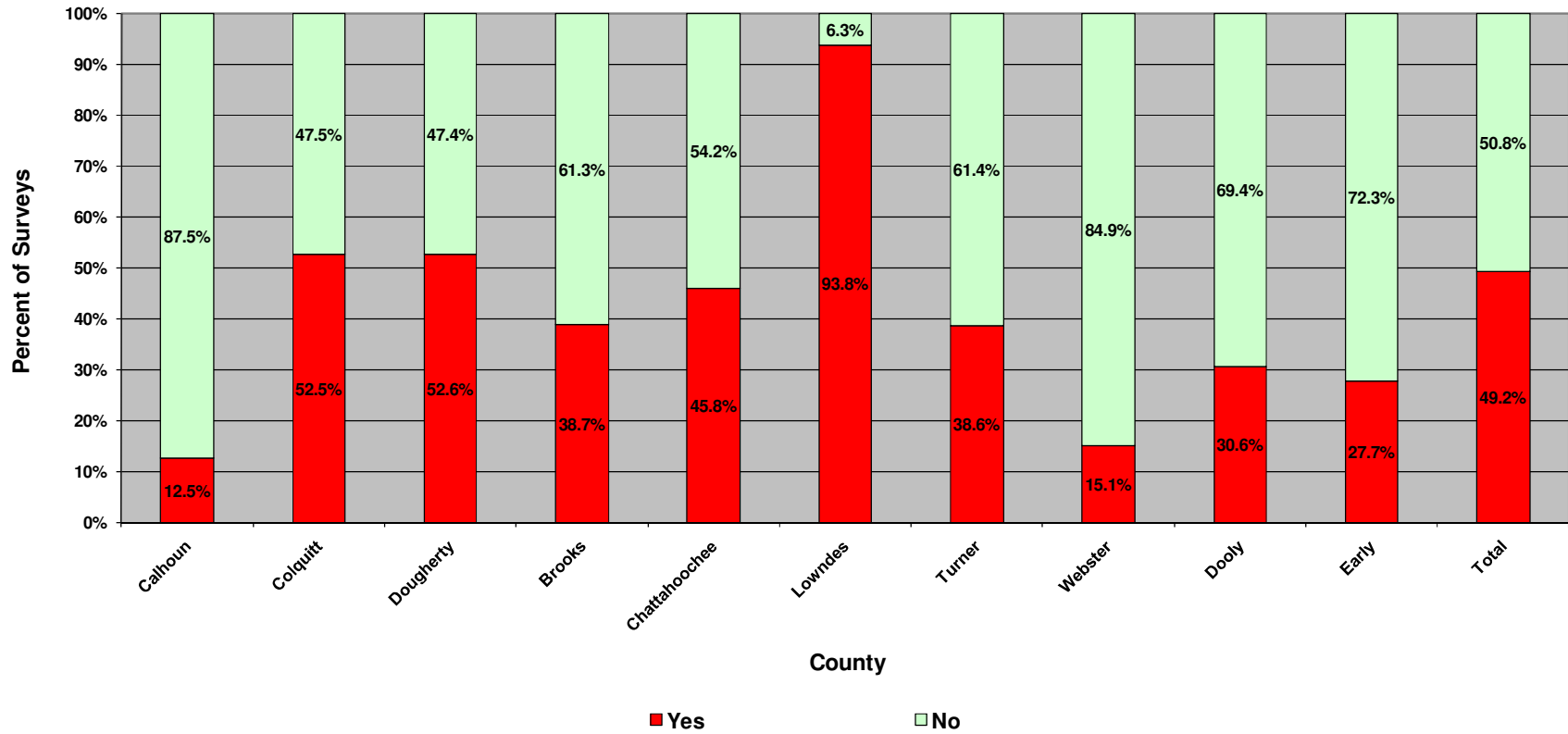
Experience Traffic Backup on Road



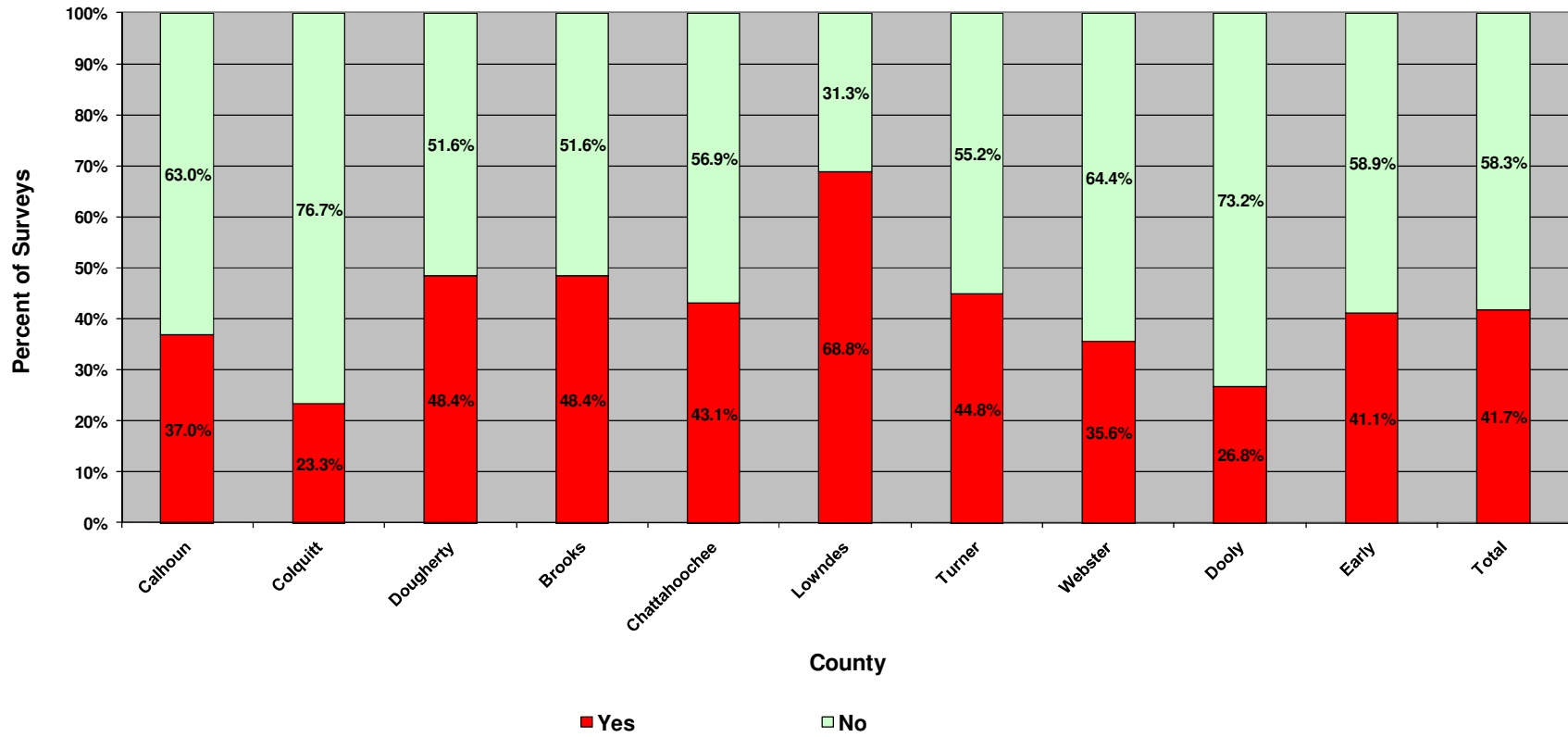
Experience Transportation Problems



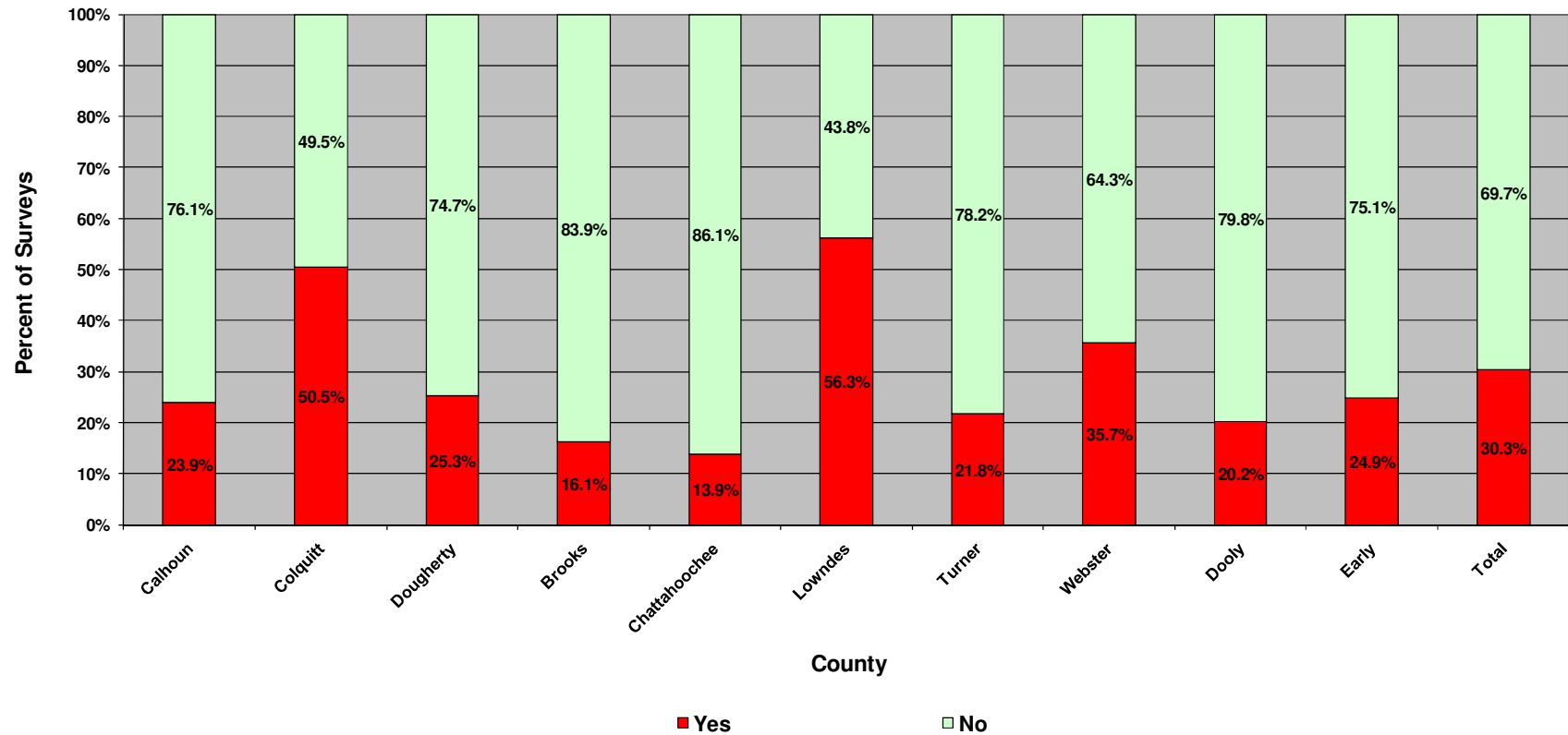
Experience Traffic Backup at Intersections



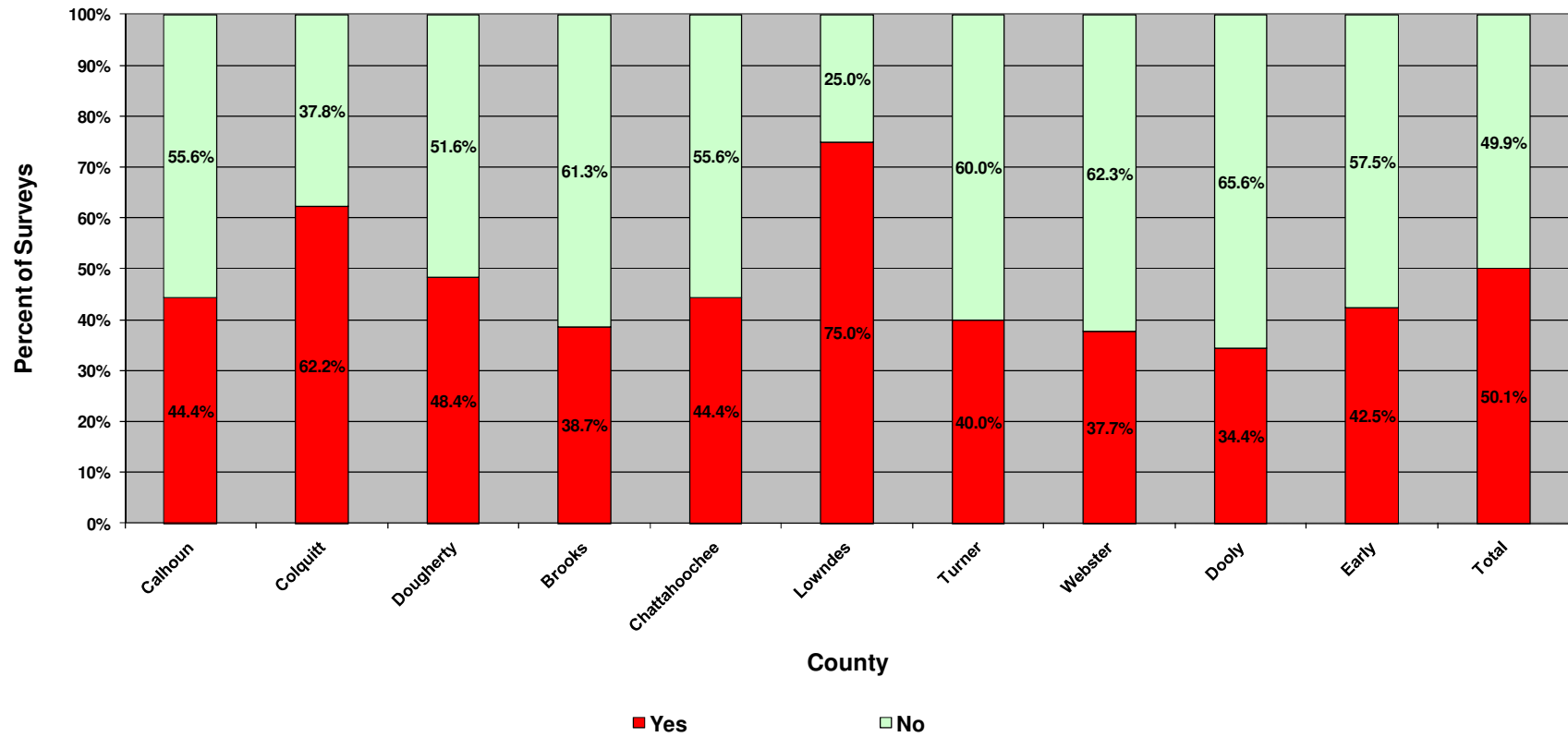
Need Traffic Signal at Intersections



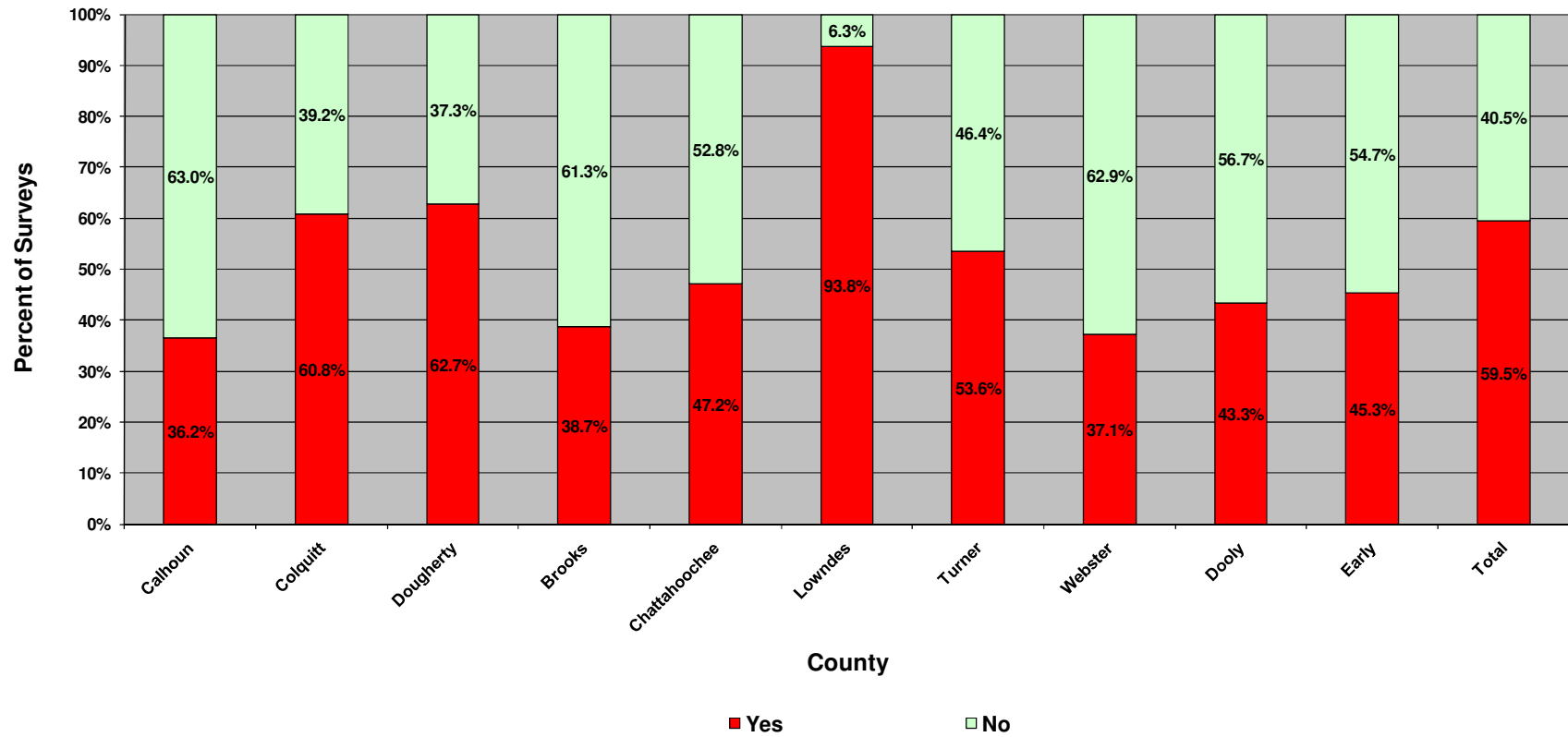
Need Improved Roadway Shoulders



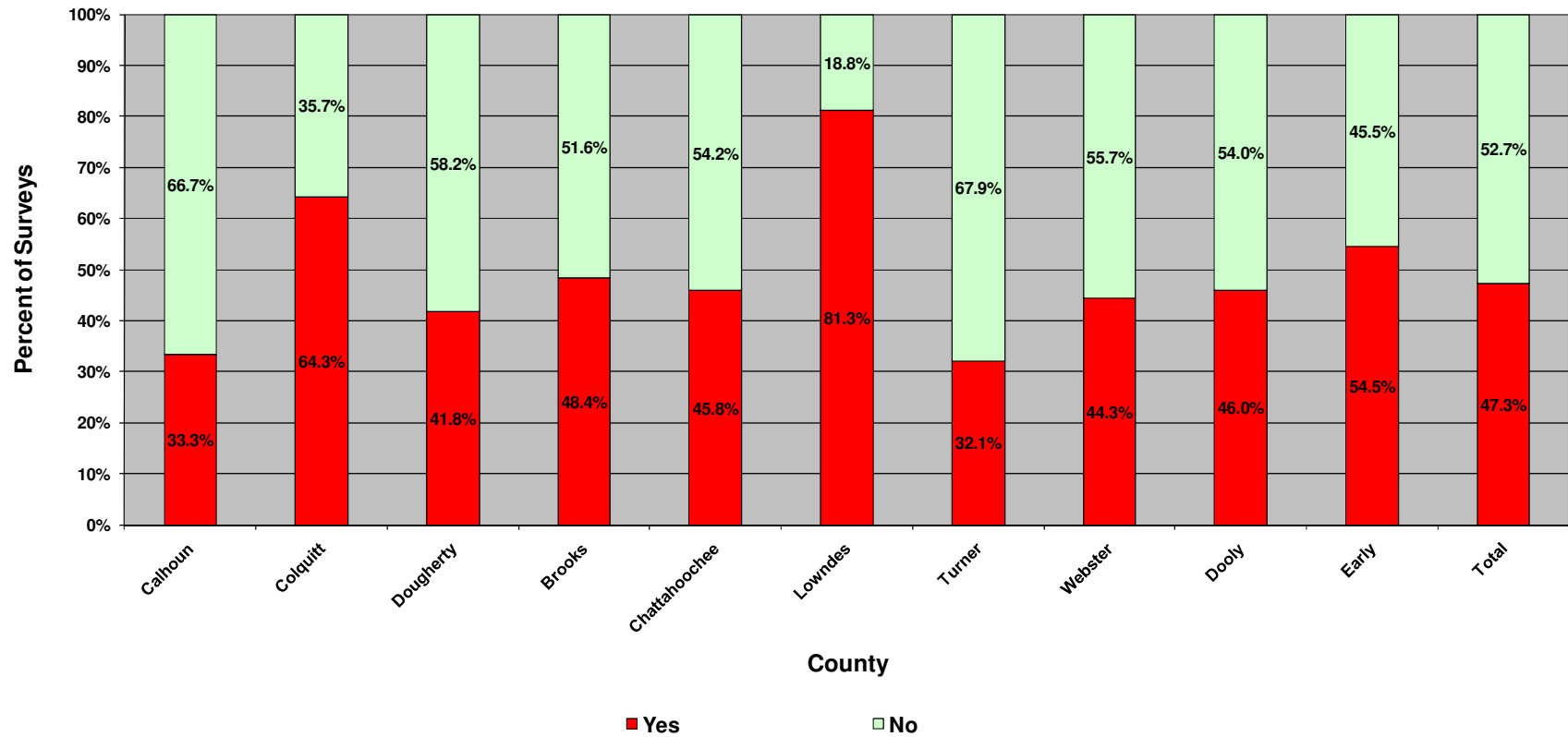
Unsafe Intersections



Problems with Speeding



Problems with Tractor Trailer Trucks



Problems Accessing Roadway

